1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

IV. — SHAMANISM AND INCANTATIONS.

Shamanism.

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General Remarks. — Shamanism may be defined as the art of influencing, by the help of guardian spirits, the course of events. Among the Koryak we may distinguish professional shamanism and family shamanism. Professional shamans are those who are inspired by special spirits. Their opportunities for displaying their powers are not limited to a certain group of people. The more powerful they are, the wider is the circle in which they can practise their art. Family shamanism is connected with the domestic hearth, whose welfare is under its care. The family shaman has charge of the celebration of family festivals, rites, sacrificial ceremonies, of the use of their charms and amulets, and of their incantations. Some women possess, besides the knowledge of incantations which are a family secret, that of a considerable number of other incantations, which they make use of outside of the family circle for a consideration.

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Professional Shamans. — The professional shaman is called eñe'ñala'n (that is, a man inspired by spirits), from e'ñeñ ("shaman's spirit").[1] Every shaman has his own guardian spirits, that help him in his struggle with the disease-inflicting kalau, in his rivalry with other shamans, and also in attacks upon his enemies. The shaman spirits usually appear in the form of animals or birds. The most common guardian spirits are the wolf, the bear, the raven, the sea-gull, and the eagle. Nobody can become a shaman of his own free will. The spirits enter into any person they may choose, and force him to become their servant. Those that become shamans are usually nervous young men subject to hysterical fits, by means of which the spirits express their demand that the young man should consecrate himself to the service of shamanism. I was told that people about to become shamans have fits of wild paroxysm alternating with a condition of complete exhaustion. They will lie motionless for two or three days without partaking of food or drink. Finally they retire to the wilderness, where they spend their time enduring hunger and cold in order to prepare themselves for their calling. There the spirits appear to them in visible form, endow them with power, and instruct them. The second of the two shamans of whom I shall speak below told me how the spirits of the wolf, raven, bear, sea-gull, and plover, appeared to him in the desert, — now in the form of men, now in that of animals, — and commanded him to become a shaman, or to die.

[1] At present the Koryak also term the Christian God and the images of the Orthodox Church e'ñeñ.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

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There is no doubt that professional shamanism has developed from the ceremonials of family shamanism.[1] The latter form is more primitive, while the functions of professional shamans somewhat resemble those of priests. However, the influence of contact with a higher civilization has had a more disastrous effect upon professional shamanism than upon that practised in the family.

There was a time when the Koryak had all the different kinds of shamans that are still in existence among the Chukchee. The Koryak tell of miracles performed by shamans who have died recently, but at the present time there are very few professional shamans among them. I did not find a single shaman in the settlements of the Maritime Koryak along Penshina Bay. The old men of these settlements told me that many people had died among them during the epidemic of measles which had ravaged these regions before my arrival, because there were no shamans to drive away the disease.[2]

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Fig. 18 ($\frac{1}{12}$). Shaman's Head-Band.

The Koryak shamans have no drums of their own: they use the drums belonging to the family in whose house the shamanistic performance takes place. It seems that they wear no special dress: at least, the shamans whom I had occasion to observe wore ordinary clothing. One embroidered jacket (Plate I, Fig. 1) and head-band (Fig. 18) were sold to me for my collection as the garb used by the Alutor shamans; but the jacket looks like an ordinary dancing-jacket used in the whale festival, except that it has some small tassels which have apparently been borrowed from Tungus shamans.

[1] It is very strange that both Steller and Krasheninnikoff, who spent several years in Kamchatka, assert that the Kamchadal had no professional shamans, but that every one could exercise that art, especially women and Koe'kŭnč (men dressed in women's clothes); that there was no special shaman garb; that they used no drum, but simply pronounced incantations, and practised divination (Krasheninnikoff, III, p. 114; Steller, p. 277), which description appears more like the family shamanism of the present day. It is improbable that the Kamchadal should form an exception among the rest of the Asiatic and American tribes in having had no professional shamans.

[2] It is interesting to note that among the Yakut, a people with a more developed primitive culture, the embracing of Christian teaching has resulted in the decline of family shamanism, which, according to Trostchansky (p. 108), used to be practised among them, rather than that of special shamanism. Professional shamans can be found everywhere among the Yakut, even at the present time.

Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

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Fig. 2. Man's Dancing-Jacket.

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Fig. 1. Shaman's Jacket.

The Koryak.

[Facing p. 48]

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

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During the entire period of my sojourn among the Koryak I had opportunity to see only two shamans. Both were young men, and neither enjoyed special respect on the part of his relatives. Both were poor men who worked as laborers for the rich members of their tribe. One of them was a Maritime Koryak from Alutor. He used to come to the village of Kamenskoye in company with a Koryak trader. He was a bashful youth. His features, though somewhat wild, were flexible and pleasant, and his eyes were bright. I asked him to show me proof of his shamanistic art. Unlike other shamans, he consented without waiting to be coaxed. The people put out the oil-lamps in the underground house in which he stopped with his master. Only a few coals were glowing on the hearth, and it was almost dark in the house. On the large platform which is put up in the front part of the house as the seat and sleeping-place for visitors, and not far from where my wife and I were sitting, we could just discern the shaman in an ordinary shaggy shirt of reindeer-skin, squatting on the reindeer-skins that covered the platform. His face was covered with a large oval drum.

Suddenly he commenced to beat the drum softly and to sing in a plaintive voice: then the beating of the drum grew stronger and stronger; and his song — in which could be heard sounds imitating the howling of the wolf, the groaning of the cargoose, and the voices of other animals, his guardian spirits — appeared to come, sometimes from the corner nearest to my seat, then from the opposite end, then again from the middle of the house, and then it seemed to proceed from the ceiling. He was a ventriloquist. Shamans versed in this art are believed to possess particular power. His drum also seemed to sound, now over my head, now at my feet, now behind, now in front of me. I could see nothing; but it seemed to me that the shaman was moving around us, noiselessly stepping upon the platform with his fur shoes, then retiring to some distance, then coming nearer, lightly jumping, and then squatting down on his heels.

All of a sudden the sound of the drum and the singing ceased. When the women had relighted their lamps, he was lying, completely exhausted, on a white reindeer-skin on which he had been sitting before the shamanistic performance (Plate II, Fig. 1). The concluding words of the shaman, which he pronounced in a recitative, were uttered as though spoken by the spirit whom he had summoned up, and who declared that the "disease" had left the village, and would not return.

The shaman's prediction suited me admirably, for one of the old Koryak had forbidden his children to go into the house where I stopped to take measurements, saying that they would die if they allowed themselves to be measured.[1]

[1] It will be interesting to quote here from the work of Dr. Shanin (I, p. 378) on this subject: "Up to this time no one has taken any anthropological measurements of the Koryak; and this is impossible, for they are too ignorant and superstitious, and they are exceedingly opposed to being measured. They absolutely refused to comply with our request in this matter, despite the hospitality we met in their homes."

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 R14 Koryak RY4

He also tried to stir up the other Koryak against me, pointing out to them that an epidemic of measles had broken out after the departure of Dr. Slunin's expedition, and that the same thing might take place after I left.

I made an appointment with the shaman's master to have him call on me, together with the shaman, on the following day. I wished to take a record in writing of the text of the incantations which I had heard; but when I woke up in the morning, I was informed that the shaman had left at daybreak.

I saw another shaman among the Reindeer Koryak of the Taigonos Peninsula. He had been called from a distant camp to treat a syphilitic patient who had large ulcers in his throat that made him unable to swallow. I was not present at the treatment of the patient, since the latter lived in another camp, at a distance of several miles from us, and I learned of the performance of the rite only after it was over. The Koryak asserted that the patient was relieved immediately after the shamanistic exercises, and that he drank two cups of tea without any difficulty. Among other things, the shaman ordered the isolation of the patient from his relatives, lest the spirits that had caused the disease might pass to others. A separate tent was pitched next to the main tent for the patient and his wife, who was taking care of him. I lived in the house of the patient's brother, the official chief of the Taigonos Koryak. At my request he sent reindeer to bring the shaman. The shaman arrived. His appearance did not inspire much confidence.

In order to obtain a large remuneration, he refused at first, under various pretexts, to perform his art. I asked him to "look at my road;" that is, to divine whether I should reach the end of my journey safely. The official chief said that this performance must take place in my own tent, and not in that of some one else; but the shaman declared that his spirits would not enter a Russian lodging, and that he would be in deadly peril if he should call up spirits for a foreigner. Finally it was decided that the peril for the shaman would be eliminated by making his remuneration large enough to completely satisfy the spirits. I promised to give the shaman, not only a red flannel shirt, which he liked very much, but also a big Belgian knife. I had offered him first the choice of one of the two articles; but he declared that his spirits liked one as well as the other.

Another difficulty arose over the drum. The chief himself found a way out of it by means of casuistry. He gave his own drum, saying that a family drum must not be taken into another Koryak's house, but that it was permissible to take it into mine. The drum was brought into my tent by one of the three wives of the chief. It was in its case, because the drum must not be taken out of the house without its cover. A violation of this taboo may result in bringing on a blizzard.

During the shamanistic exercises there were present, besides my wife and myself, the chief, his wife who had brought the drum, my cossack, and

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

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the interpreter. The shaman had a position on the floor in a corner of the tent, not far from the entrance (see Plate II, Fig. 2). He was sitting with his legs crossed, and from time to time he would rise to his knees. He beat the drum violently, and sang in a loud voice, summoning the spirits. As he explained to me after the ceremony, his main guardian spirits (e'ñeñs) were One-who-walks-around-the-Earth (No'taka'vya, one of the mythical names of the bear), Broad-soled-One (Umya'ılhın, one of the mythical names of the wolf), and the raven. The appearance of the spirits of these animals was accompanied by imitations of sounds characteristic of their voices. Through their mediation he appealed to The-One-on-High (Gı'čhola'n) with the following song, which was accompanied by the beating of the drum: —

"Nıme'leu neye'iten.
"(It is) good that (he) should arrive.

Nume'leñ ho'mma nıme'leu ove'ka o'pta neye'itek."
Also I should well myself also reach home."

That is, "Let him reach home safely, and let me also reach home safely." Suddenly, in the midst of the wildest singing and beating of the drum, he stopped, and said to me, "The spirits say that I should cut myself with a knife. You will not be afraid?"[1] — "You may cut yourself, I am not afraid," I replied. "Give me your knife, then. I am performing my incantations for you, so I have to cut myself with your knife," said he. To tell the truth, I commenced to feel somewhat uneasy; while my wife, who was sitting on the floor by my side, and who was completely overwhelmed by the wild shrieks and the sound of the drum, entreated me not to give him the knife. Until that time I had heard different narratives about shamans cutting their abdomen, but I had never seen it done. On the Palpal Mountains I was told that a woman shaman, who died quite recently, used to treat her patients by opening the affected place, cutting out a piece of flesh, and swallowing it, thus destroying the disease, together with the spirit that had caused it. It was said that the wound she made would heal up immediately. Several times I attended the exercises of a Tungus shaman nicknamed Mashka, who subsequently served me as guide on my way from Gishiga to the Kolyma. He pretended that his guardians belonged to the Koryak spirits, and demanded that he cut himself with his knife. The wild fits of ecstasy which would possess him during his performances frightened me. In such cases he would demand all those present to give him a knife or a spear. He was married to a Yukaghir woman from the Korkodon River, whose brother was also a shaman. She would always search him before a performance, take away all his knives, and request all those present not to give him any sharp instruments, for he had once cut himself nearly to death. His spirits, being of Koryak origin, spoke out of him in the Koryak language; i. e., part of the performance was in the Koryak

[1] Shamans, with the help of the spirits, may cut and otherwise injure their bodies without suffering harm.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

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Fig. 1.

Fig. 2.

Photogravure Sarajac.

The Koryak.

[Facing p. 51]

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

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language. I asked him several times to dictate to me what his spirits were saying, and he would invariably reply that he did not remember, that he forgot everything after the seance was over, and that, besides, he did not understand the language of his spirits. At first I thought that he was deceiving me; but I had several opportunities of convincing myself that he really did not understand any Koryak. Evidently he had learned by heart Koryak incantations which he could pronounce only in a state of excitement.

To return to our Koryak shaman. I took from its sheath my sharp "Finnish" travelling-knife, that looked like a dagger, and gave it to him. The light in the tent was put out; but the dim light of the arctic spring night (it was in April), which penetrated the canvas of the tent, was sufficient to allow me to follow the movements of the shaman. He took the knife, beat the drum, and sang, telling the spirits that he was ready to carry out their wishes. After a little while he put away the drum, and, emitting a rattling sound from his throat, he thrust the knife into his breast up to the hilt. I noticed, however, that after having cut his jacket, he turned the knife downward. He drew out the knife with the same rattling in his throat, and resumed beating the drum. Then he turned to me, and said that the spirits had secured for me a safe journey over the Koryak land, and predicted that the Sun-Chief (Tiyk-e'yum) — i. e., the Czar — would reward me for my labors.

Contrary to my expectations, he returned the knife to me (I thought he would say that the knife with which he had cut himself must be left with him), and through the hole in his jacket he showed spots of blood on his body. Of course, these spots had been made before. However, this cannot be looked upon as mere deception. Things visible and imaginary are confounded to such an extent in primitive consciousness, that the shaman himself may have thought that there was, invisible to others, a real gash in his body, as had been demanded by the spirits. The common Koryak, however, are sure that the shaman actually cuts himself, and that the wound heals up immediately.

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Shamans that change their Sex. — Among the Koryak, only traditions are preserved of shamans who change their sex in obedience to the commands of spirits. I do not know of a single case of this so-called "transformation" at the present time. Among the Chukchee, however, even now shamans called ırka^{v}-la'ul may be found quite often. They are men clothed in woman's attire, who are believed to be transformed physically into women. The transformed shamans were believed to be the most powerful of all shamans. The conception of the change of sex arises from the idea, alluded to farther on, of the conformity between the nature of an object and its outer covering or garb. Among the Koryak they were called qava'u or qeve'u. In his chapter on the Koryak, Krasheninnikoff makes mention of the ke'yev, — i. e., men occupying the position of concubines,[1] — and he compares them with the Kamchadal

[1] Krasheninnikoff, II, p. 223.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 574 Koryak R:14

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koe'kčuč, as he calls them; i. e., men transformed into women. "Every koe'kčuč," says Krasheninnikoff, "is regarded as a magician and interpreter of dreams;"[1] but, judging from his confused description, it may be inferred that the most important feature of the institution of the koe'kčuč lay, not in their shamanistic power, but in their position with regard to the satisfaction of the unnatural inclinations of the Kamchadal. The koe'kčuč wore women's clothes, they did women's work, and were in the position of wives or concubines. They did not enjoy respect: they held a social position similar to that of woman. They could enter the house through the draught-channel, which corresponds to the opening in the roof of the porch of the Koryak underground house,[2] just like all the women; while men would consider it a humiliation to do so. The Koryak told me the same with reference to their qava'u. But, setting aside the question of the perversion of the sexual instinct connected with this so-called "change of sex," the interesting question remains, Why is a shaman believed to become more powerful when he is changed into a woman?[3]

The father of Yulta, a Koryak from the village of Kamenskoye, who died not long ago, and who had been a shaman, had worn woman's clothes for two years by order of the spirits; but, since he had been unable to attain complete transformation, he implored his spirits to permit him to resume man's clothes. His request was granted, but under the condition that he should put on women's clothes during shamanistic ceremonies.[4] As may be seen from Plate II, Fig. 1, the shaman wears woman's striped trousers.

It should be stated here that I did not learn of transformations of women shamans into men among the Koryak of to-day, which transformations are known among the Chukchee under the name qa'čikičheča ("a man-like [woman]").[5] We find, however, accounts of such transformations in the tales; and the conception of the change of sex is the same in both cases.

Women shamans, and those transformed into women, are considered to be very powerful. I was told that a woman shaman on the Palpal Mountains

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[1] Krasheninnikoff, II, p. 114.

[2] See p. 14, Footnote 4; and Steller, p. 312.

[3] It is interesting to note that traces of the change of a shaman's sex into that of a woman may be found among many Siberian tribes. During shamanistic exercises, Tungus and Yukaghir shamans put on, not a man's, but a woman's, apron, with tassels. In the absence of a shamanistic dress, or in cases of the so-called "small" shamanism, the Yakut shaman will put on a woman's jacket of foal-skins and a woman's white ermine fur cap. I myself was once present at a shamanistic ceremony of this kind in the Kolyma district. Shamans part their hair in the middle, and braid it like women, but wear it loose during the shamanistic performances. Some shamans have two iron circles representing breasts sewed to their aprons. The right side of a horse-skin is considered to be tabooed for women, and shamans are not permitted to lie on it. During the first three days after confinement, when Ayisi't, the deity of fecundity, is supposed to be near the lying-in woman, access to the house where she is confined is forbidden to men, but not to shamans. Trostchansky (p. 123) thinks that among the Yakut, who have two categories of shamans, — the "white" ones representing creative forces, and the "black" ones representing destructive forces, — the latter have a tendency to become like women, for the reason that they derive their origin from women shamans.

[4] Among the Eskimo "the servant of the deity Sedna is represented by a man dressed in a woman's costume" (Boas, *Baffin-Land Eskimo*, p. 140).

[5] See Bogoras, Chukchee Materials, p. xvii.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 R44 Koryak R44

who was all covered with syphilitic ulcers, but whom I had no opportunity of seeing, did not die because she was supported by her guardian spirits. On the other hand, child-birth may result in a complete or temporary loss of shamanistic power. During the period of menstruation a woman is not permitted to touch a drum.

Eme'mqut's shamanistic power disappeared after the mythical Triton had bewitched him, and caused him to give birth to a boy. His power was restored to him after his sister had killed the Triton's sister, by which deed the act of giving birth was completely eliminated.[1] Tale 113 also tells of the transformation of men into women. Illa' dressed himself like a woman and went to his neighbors. When River-Man (Veye'mıla'n), the neighbor's son, recognized him, Illa', in revenge, filled him with the continual desire to become a woman.

In Tale 129 Kilu''s brother became pregnant with twins. When he was unable to give birth, his sister took out his entrails and put the entrails of a mouse in their place. After the children had been born, she replaced his entrails. Apparently the tranformation was not complete in this case.

Family Shamanism. *The Drum.* — In the chapter on guardians and charms I referred to the drum as a household guardian. In connection with professional shamanism I mentioned that the drum is closely connected with shamanistic performances, but not with the person of the shaman, as is the case among other Asiatic shamans. I shall point out here the part played by the drum in family shamanism.

The power of the drum lies in the sounds emitted by it. On the one hand, the rhythm and change of pitch produced by skilful beating with the stick evoke an emotional excitement in primitive man, thus placing the drum in the ranks of a musical instrument. On the other hand, the sound of the drum, just like the human voice or song, is in itself considered as something living, capable of influencing the invisible spirits. The stick is the tongue of the drum, the Yukaghir say. As seen from Tale 9, The-Master-on-High himself, in his creative activity, needs a drum. Big-Raven borrowed the drum from him, and gave it to men.

The following song, which was sung while beating the drum by a Reindeer Koryak woman of the Taigonos Peninsula, and which may be regarded as a prayer to the Creator (Tenanto'mwan), to whom it was addressed, characterizes the relation of the latter to the acquiring of the drum by man.

Text.

"Gı'ča ivi'hi" 'ya'yai getei'kilın' nıme'leu mmı'tvala qoya'u evi'yıke ı'mıñ
"Thou said, 'drum make' well (we) shall live the reindeer not dying also

yava'letın kımi'ñu nıme'leu."
afterwards children well (let live)."

[1] See Tale 85.

I: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak J74

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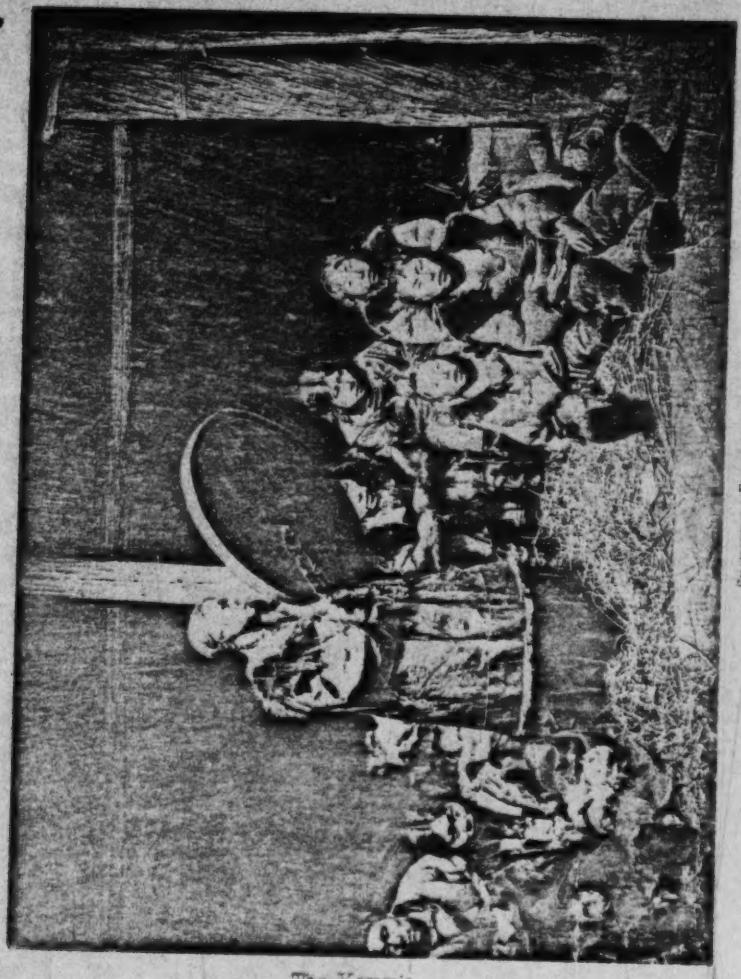

SHAMANISTIC PERFORMANCE.

The Koryak.

[Facing p. 55]

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

tales do we find any trace of the representative principle before the advent of the Russians. The principle of seniority dominated in the settlement as well as in the family. By seniority we must not understand greater age alone, but also greater physical strength. Aged weaklings were not considered. As long as no stronger man appeared, the founder of the settlement was the elder. The sacred post[1] erected by him was regarded as the guardian of the entire settlement. The strong man always had several wives and many children, and after his death his family continued to dominate in the settlement. In the reports of the Cossacks who fought the Koryak, mention is made of the elders of settlements. There the Yakut name Toyon is given them, which name in Yakut also means the representative of a clan or gens. The Koryak called them E'yem, which means "the strong one." What the power of these leaders was cannot be gathered from these reports; but they relate that the settlements would at times combine into defensive and offensive unions, as was the case during the uprisings of the Koryak against the Russian conquerors. What part was played in the formation of these unions by the E'yems, what part by the mass of the Koryak, we do not know. During battles the extreme authority was vested in the "strong men" and the good warriors, but leadership in war was not always accorded to the elder in times of peace.

The family shamans and the professional shamans, who regulated the family cult and the general religious life of the people, enjoyed a position of a certain prominence in social affairs. Often the "elders" and "braves" themselves possessed shamanistic powers, or they kept shaman helpers, whose magic assisted them in their combats with enemies.

The fortification of a settlement[2] was the concern of all its inhabitants. I have spoken before of the guardians of settlements and of the communal character of the whale festival.[3] It is very probable that in ancient times special houses were set apart in the villages for gatherings and feasts. In describing the whale festival[4] I pointed out that the celebrations took place in the largest house of the village, that the fire of the hearth was kept alive by wood supplied by each and every one of the participating families, the beds and sleeping-tents having previously been carried out of doors. Thus the dwelling was temporarily transformed into a public house, the family hearth became a communal hearth, and all the inhabitants of the settlement cooked their meals at its fire. I saw another public house at the fair in the Palpal. This house was a large skin tent built by all the Reindeer Koryak who had come to the fair.[5] In one myth[6] we are told that in the centre of the kalau settlement a large house was situated, where the kalau were gathered for a council.

We find another manifestation of social tendencies in the still surviving

[1] See Part I, Fig. 4, p. 37. [2] See p. 563. [3] See Part I, p. 67.
[4] Ibid., p. 71. [5] See p. 451; also Plate XIX, Fig. 2. [6] See Part I, p. 314, No. 114.

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

tory. Being hunters, they occupy the wooded valleys of rivers which abound in game, and where the Koryak with their herds are seldom met with. Friction is thus avoided. It even happens that the Koryak and the Tungus peacefully camp not far from each other or side by side. Thus the Tungus gradually advanced to several tributaries of the Penshina River, on which the squirrel occurs; and along the shores of the Okhotsk Sea they quite recently penetrated, even to Kamchatka, where, besides finding plenty of food for their reindeer, and mountain-sheep for hunting, they ran across a valuable fur-animal, — the sable.

Thus the original warlike relations of the Koryak with the neighboring natives were in the course of time superseded by entirely peaceful relations, based chiefly on barter. It is true that the Koryak still have contemptuous nicknames for each of the peoples; but, wherever they come into contact with these peoples, they form friendships and favor intermarriages.

An interesting trait in the lives of these primitive peoples is the remarkable tolerance with which they treat each other's customs and beliefs, and their willingness, in case of need, to recognize each other's strength or superiority. Thus the Koryak do not hesitate to appeal for assistance to the shamans of the Chukchee or Tungus. A foreign shaman is even treated with more than the ordinary respect accorded to his class, for he is the master of spirits who are beyond the control of local shamans. When a Koryak enters into the relation of marriage or of friendship with a person belonging to another people, the accompanying ceremonies follow the custom of either of the two peoples, according to agreement. If a Koryak, for example, marries a Tungus girl, the marriage ceremony is performed in accordance with Tungus customs, and he pays a ransom for the bride. A Tungus girl, on the other hand, on entering a Koryak household, puts on Koryak garments and submits to the customs which regulate the home life of the Koryak. A Tungus has to serve for his Koryak bride. Tungus-Koryak marriages are, however, very rare in the interior of the country. As indicated above, intermarriages of the Koryak with the Tungus are of most frequent occurrence in the territory of the Reindeer Koryak on the Gishiga and Varkhalam Rivers. Although the Tungus are all Christians, they do not invite the Russian priests to perform their marriage ceremonies whenever one of the parties belongs to the heathen Koryak, but wed according to Koryak or ancient Tungus customs. Marriages between the Koryak and the Chukchee are more frequent than those between the former and the Tungus. In the case of these intermarriages, the Chukchee camps within the Koryak territory, like those in the north of Kamchatka or on the Parapol Dol, adopt Koryak customs; on the Chukchee frontier, on the other hand, in the northern part of the Palpal, the Koryak submit to Chukchee customs, including that of exchanging wives.

11: Kennan--208-209 T-3 (1865) 1870 Koryak
116, 182, 756, 771 Reindeer

"The religion of all the natives of Northeastern Siberia, wandering and settled, including six or seven widely different tribes, is that corrupted form of Buddhism known as 'Shamanism.' It is a religion which varies considerably in different places and among different people; but with the Koraks and Chookchees it may be briefly defined as the worship of the evil spirits who are supposed to be embodied in all the mysterious powers and manifestations of Nature, such as epidemic and contagious diseases, severe storms, famines, eclipses, and brilliant Auroras. It takes its name from the 'Shamáns' or priests, who act as interpreters of the evil spirits' wishes and as mediators between them and man. All unnatural phenomena, and especially those of a disastrous and terrible nature, are attributed to the direct action of these evil spirits, and are considered as plain manifestations of their displeasure. It is claimed by many that the whole system of 'Shamanism' is a gigantic imposture practised by a few cunning priests upon the easy credulity of superstitious natives. [209] This I am sure is a prejudiced view. No one who has ever lived with the Siberian natives, studied their character, subjected himself to the same influences that surround them, and put himself as far as possible in their places, will ever doubt the sincerity of either priests or followers, or wonder that the worship of evil spirits should be their only religion. It is the only religion possible for such men in such circumstances."

11: Kennan--210-212 T-3 (1865) 1870 Koryak-1-2
116, 182, 756, 771 Reindeer

"If any proof were needed that this system of religion is the natural outgrowth of human nature in certain conditions of barbarism, it would be furnished by the universal prevalence of Shamanism in Northeastern Siberia among so many diverse tribes of different character and different origin. The tribe of Tungoos, for instance is certainly of Chinese descent, and the tribe of Yakoots is certainly Turkish. Both came from different regions, bringing different beliefs, superstitions, and modes of thought; but, when both were removed from all disturbing agencies and subjected to the same external influences, both developed precisely the same system [211] of religious belief. ... The Kamtchadals who accompanied me to the Samanka Mountains were the sons of Christian parents, and had been brought up from infancy in the Greek Church; they were firm believers in the Divine atonement and in Divine Providence, and prayed always night and morning for safety and preservation; yet, when overtaken by a storm in that gloomy range of mountains, the sense of the supernatural overcame their religious convictions, God seemed far away while evil spirits were near and active, and they sacrificed a dog, like very pagans, to propitiate the diabolical wrath of which the storm was an evidence. I could cite many similar instances, where the strongest and apparently most sincere [212] convictions of the reality of Divine government and superintendence have been overcome by the influence upon the imagination of some startling and unusual phenomenon of Nature. Man!s actions are governed not so much by what he intellectually

believes as by what he vividly realizes; and it is this vivid realization of diabolical presence which has given rise to the religion of Shamanism."

"The duties of the Shamáns or priests among the Koraks are, to make incantations over the sick, to hold communication with the evil spirits, and to interpret their wishes and decrees to man. Whenever any calamity, such as disease, storm, or famine comes upon a band, it is of course attributed to some spirit's displeasure, and the Shamán is consulted as to the best method of appeasing his wrath. The priest to whom application is made assembles the people in one of the largest tents of the encampment, puts on a long robe marked with fantastic figures of birds and beasts and curious hieroglyphic emblems, unbinds his long black hair, and taking up a large native drum, begins to sing in a subdued voice to the accompaniment of slow, steady drum-beats. As the song progresses it increases in energy and rapidity, the priest's eyes seem to become fixed, he contorts his body as if in spasms, and increases the vehemence of his wild chant until the drum-beats make one continuous roll. Then, springing to his feet and jerking his head convulsively until his long hair fairly snaps, he begins a frantic dance about the tent, and finally sinks apparently exhausted into his seat. In a few moments he delivers to the awe-stricken natives the message which he has received from the evil spirits, and which [213] consists generally of an order to sacrifice a certain number of dogs or reindeer, or perhaps a man, to the offended deities.

In these wild incantations the priests sometimes practise all sorts of frauds upon their credulous followers, by pretending to swallow live coals and to pierce their bodies with knives; but, in a majority of instances, the Shamán seems to actually believe that he is

under the control and guidance of diabolical intelligence. The natives themselves, however, seem to doubt occasionally the priest's pretended inspiration, and whip him severely to test the sincerity of his professions and the genuineness of his revelations. If his fortitude sustains him under the infliction without any exhibition of human weakness or suffering, his authority as a minister of the evil spirits is vindicated, and his commands obeyed."

11: Kennan--215-216 T-3 (1865) 1870 Koryak
116, 177, 756, 797 Reindeer

"The Russian Church is endeavoring by missionary enterprise to convert all the Siberian tribes to Christianity; and although they have met with a certain degree of apparent success among the settled tribes of Yookágaree, Chooáncee, and Kamtchadálle, the wandering natives still cling to Shamanism, and there are more than 70,000 followers of that religion in the scanty population of Northeastern Siberia. Any permanent and genuine conversion of the Wandering Koraks and Chook-[216]chees must be preceded by some educational enlightenment and an entire change in their mode of life."

17:Antropova E-4 (no date) 1964 RY4 Koryak RY4

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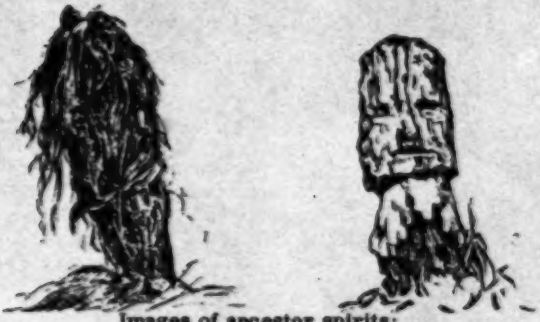

Images of ancestor spirits:
1—having "descendants"; 2—one without living "descendants."

To placate the nin'vits, the Koryaks

sacrificed to them. Thus, a hunter passing by a place considered to be inhabited by a nin'vit' had to make a sacrifice of a pinch of tobacco or several cartridges. The places inhabited by nin'vit's were very numerous; they were cliffs of unusual formation, hot springs or waterfalls, places where a corpse had been burned or a hunter perished, the ruins of a dwelling, abandoned after the death of one of its inhabitants, and so forth. Koryak ideas about the dead were ambivalent. They held that after death a person became a nin'vit', that is, a harmful, hostile being. At the same time, there was the notion of ancestors who lived somewhere underground or in the sky and helped their descendants, sending them success in the hunt, protecting their herds, etc. Ancestor images were made of wood. They were small, crudely carved wooden figures (kalak), representing a sitting or, more rarely, a standing person, with a flat face, without a nose, with two hollows in the place of eyes and a rather large hollow to indicate the mouth. During family celebrations the mouth-hole was filled with fat or fat meat. Every family had whole bundles of kalaks; every Koryak had his own kalak—his personal guardian.

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The Koryaks believed that the shaman had power over nin'vit's. The shaman communicated with nin'vit's in total darkness; the entrance to the dwelling was carefully closed, the smoke vent was stopped up with a bundle of grass, the hearth fire was put out. The shaman struck his tambourine, cried out fragmentary words and phrases, danced and sang.

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The shaman's actions were usually stimulated by intoxication from the fly-agaric eaten beforehand. When he tired, the shaman fell asleep. The Koryaks believed that the "prophetic fly-agaric" led him into the next world and arranged meetings with dead kinsmen, from whom the shaman obtained the necessary instructions. On awakening from his long sleep, the shaman related his visions to the people around him.

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The Koryak shaman did not have any special dress. He performed his rituals in the usual clothing, which differed from the rest only in the large number of tags and disks of skin or beads attached to it. Some shamans made slight changes in their dress during the ritual performance, such as wearing a man's boot on one foot, and a woman's on the other. The tambourine was narrow-rimmed.

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In addition to professional shamanism, the Koryaks also practiced family shamanism, predominantly in the hands of women. This was closely bound to the cult of the family hearth. Every member born in a family was regarded as a reincarnation of an ancestor. The exact identity of the ancestor was learned with the aid of divination. For this purpose, a stone in a leather pouch was suspended from a small tripod. The eldest member of the family

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17:Antropova E-4 (no date) 1964 RY4 Koryak RY4

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Preparations for burning a corpse.

pronounced in succession the names of the dead ancestors until the stone shook at the sound of the name. Then the family felt that the name had been guessed, and it was given to the newborn.

The reindeer-breeding and the sedentary Koryaks held various seasonal celebrations. The main holiday of the reindeer-breeders was the spring kil'vey—the festival of horns. It was celebrated after the calving, when the herd was brought to the encampment. The people brought out of their dwellings bowls with pieces of meat and the sacred wooden fire-making device which they proceeded to "feed." In autumn, they celebrated the festival of the autumn deer slaughter. This festival was also attended by shamanistic performances, sacrifices, and the "feeding" of the wooden fire-maker. The coastal hunters celebrated the festival of floating the baydar in the spring, at the beginning of the spring hunting season. At this time they sacrificed dogs. After the celebration, they opened the summer entrance to the semi-dugout. After the closing of the autumn sea hunting season (in November) the coastal Koryaks held the "seal festival" (in olden times it was the "whale festival"). The participants in the celebration pleaded with the animals killed during the hunt to return to the sea and let themselves be caught again next year, and also to bring along their relatives with them. The dead animals were replaced by zoomorphic representations made of seaweed.

The creator of men and the universe, according to Koryak beliefs, was An'an' or Etyny. However, when man was being created, the harmful being, Nen'vetgyyn'yn, intervened. It took out the hard hearts of the first men and substituted clay hearts; this led to all the weaknesses, diseases and misfortunes among men.

The Koryaks regarded wolves as their relatives (some sources also name the bear). The wolf was described as a shaman animal. Even in the 20th century, many Alyutortsy strictly observed the taboo on killing wolves, which, of course, had an extremely adverse effect on their reindeer-breeding.

The Koryaks burned the bodies of their dead.

Folk Arts

The Koryaks had a cycle of myths closely akin to those of the Chukchi and Itel'mens, and similar to the Eskimos'. The principal character of these myths is the raven-creator (in Koryak, Kuykynnyaku or Kutkynnyaku) which, according to the beliefs of these peoples, gave people all their material goods: he gave men reindeer and dogs, and taught them reindeer-breeding, fishing, sea hunting, and the use of dog transportation. In some of the myths, the image of the raven is fused with the image of the Etyny. But most

23: Krasheninnikov N-3 (1736-40) 1764 Koryak

756 785 During their ſacrifices their *ſhamans* or ſorcerers beat a little drum like that uſed by the *Jakutſki*, and the neighbouring nations. Some of the *Shamans* are reckoned phyſicians, and are thought, by beating upon the drum, to drive away diſtempers. In the year 1739 I had an opportunity of ſeeing, at the lower *Kamtſchatkoi* fort, the moſt famous *Shaman Carimlacha*, who was not only of great reputation among theſe wild people, but was alſo reſpected by our Coſſacks, for the many extraordinary feats that he performed; particularly that of ſtabbing his belly with a knife, and letting a great quantity of blood run out, which he drank: however this he performed in ſuch an awkward manner, that any one, who was not blinded by ſuperſtition, might eaſily diſcover the trick. At firſt, ſitting upon his knees, and beating ſome time upon his drum, he ſtruck his knife into his belly, and then, from below his furred coat, he drew out a handful of blood, which he eat, licking his fingers. I could not help laughing at the ſimplicity of the trick, which the pooreſt player of legerdemain would have been aſhamed of. One might ſee him ſlip the knife down below his furr, and that he ſqueezed the blood out of a bladder which he had in his boſom. After all this conjuration he thought ſtill to ſurpriſe us more by ſhewing us his belly all bloody, pretending to have cured the wound which he 756 had not made. He told us, that the evil ſpirits appeared to him 776 in different forms, and came from different places; ſome came 787 from the ſea, others out of the burning mountains; ſome of them were very large, and ſome very ſmall; ſome had no hands, and ſome were half burned; the ſpirits of the ſea were much finer dreſſed than the others, and appeared to him as it were in a dream, and at ſuch a time they tormented him ſo much, that he was almoſt out of his ſenſes.

755 782 When the ſorcerers pretend to cure any diſtemper by their conjurations, ſometimes they order a dog to be killed, at other times